

The AGE of new heroes



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The typical Hollywood hero changed in the age of "Black Panther" and "Captain Marvel." American comics started in the 19th century as accompaniment to newspapers. Since then, their popularity soared to become an integral piece of American culture.

Despite their universal appeal, the first superheroes only served to represent white men. The industry started off with Mandrake the Magician and then followed with Superman four years later. Fast forward to February 2018, when "Black Panther" hit theaters. Now, children and adults alike could view a strong cast of people of color on screen, both men and women depicted as powerhouses worthy of the coveted title of "hero." Since then, all types of heroes are debated in terms of representation.

With new recreations of classic comic book superheroes appearing constantly on the silver screen, audiences began to challenge the idea that heroes like Superman are "supposed to be a white man." This led to Michael B. Jordan rumored to allegedly

make the final casting call for DC's newest adaptation of Superman last year, according to ComicBook.com. Despite the project falling through the cracks, this still led to more discussion about heroic representation.

March 8, 2019, "Captain Marvel" premiered, thus striking more conversation for more representation. However, more critiques arose against the historic Marvel movie. Some viewers claimed the piece held "toxic feminism," and exalted women above men in a detrimental style. Critic reviews slashed the movie and an uprising on Twitter even called for a boycott of the

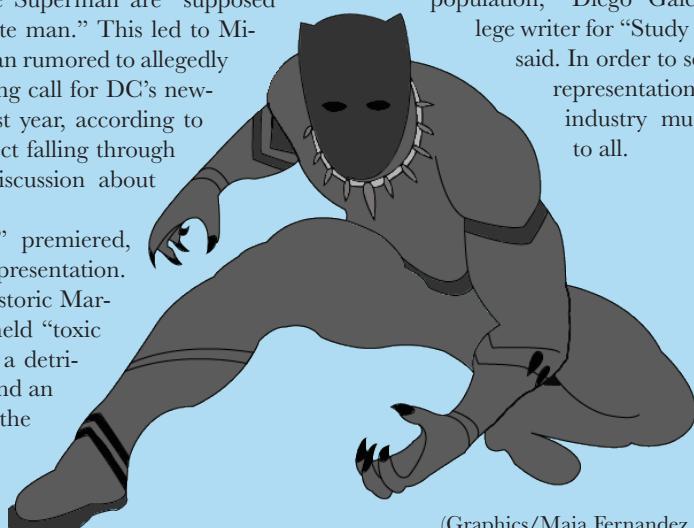
film. Women and men came together for the #AlitaChallenge, in which partakers boycotted "Captain Marvel" and saw "Alita: Battle Angel" instead. The premise of the challenge involved completely boycotting "Captain Marvel" because of "man-hating" lead actress Brie Larson. Larson gained this title by criticizing the patriarchal system on her platforms. Many proponents of the film argue Larson and the film's label of "toxic feminism" is only present because of its support of strong leading women.

Heroes are changing every day. Even with Marvel's latest release of the "Avengers: Endgame," viewers can see the demographic transition through the years of the Avengers team as a whole.

The original team consisted of five white men and one white female. Now, there is a diverse group of heroes, both of background and gender, taking the role of "Avenger."

In order to have more representation in who is considered a hero, viewers need to show interest in films that represent everyone so comic book writers continue to produce heroes who reflect the melting pot of the world.

"Consequently, it's up to comic book writers to keep pushing the envelope and create heroes who represent a larger number of the population," Diego Galcia, college writer for "Study Breaks" said. In order to see more representation, the industry must cater to all.



(Graphics/Maia Fernandez Baigun)